

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT OF TRANSGENDER PERSONS

Because Jesus calls us to offer hospitality to all who are created in the image of God (Matthew 5: 46-57),

Because Jesus Proclaimed that he was sent to proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and let the oppressed go free (Luke 4: 18),

Because Jesus taught that others will know we are his disciples by the love we have for one another (John 13: 35),

Because the Apostle Paul taught that there is no longer male nor female in the realm of God, but all are one in Christ (Galatians 3: 28),

Because people of all gender identity were welcome in the Christian family (Acts 8: 26-40),

Because the Twenty-fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ passed a resolution encouraging all member congregations to welcome transgender people into membership, ministry and full participation,

Because the Florida Conference adopted a resolution in 2010 encouraging all congregations to offer full participation in the ministry to people without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity or expression,

Because our own congregation on March 22, 2009 adopted a Statement of Inclusiveness that states our welcome and affirmation of all people, including people of every sexual identity,

Because four out of five congregations in our United Church of Christ still do not openly welcome transgender persons (according to the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns),

Because discrimination still exists for transgender people in areas of insurance coverage, housing, employment, medical treatment, and military service,

Because transgender persons continue to struggle to be accepted by both the homosexual and heterosexual communities,

Because we have within our own denomination and within our own congregation, persons who identify themselves as transgender persons,

We, the people of Spring Hill United Church of Christ, publicly affirm our support for and affirmation of the transgender people and those of every gender identity,

Furthermore, we commit ourselves individually, and as a congregation,

We pray that God will continue to open our hearts and minds to listening to the truth and to walk with us on our journey toward accepting all people.